

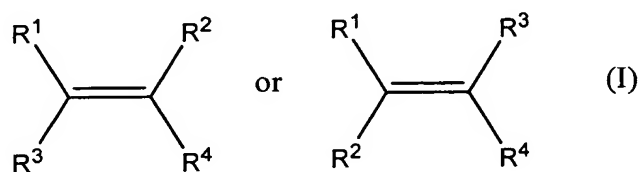
IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (previously presented) A water-based ink comprising an aqueous dispersion of polymer particles, wherein said polymer particles comprise (a) of a water-insoluble polymer having an alkyl group of 20 to 30 carbon atoms in its side chain and an acid value of 30 to 120 mg KOH/g, and (b) a hydrophobic dye.

2. (Original) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein the hydrophobic dye is at least one dye selected from the group consisting of a copper phthalocyanine dye, a quinophthalone dye and a xanthene dye.

3. (currently amended) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein the water-insoluble polymer is a vinyl polymer prepared by copolymerizing a monomer composition comprising a monomer represented by Formula (I):



wherein each of  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  is independently hydrogen atom or methyl group;  $R^3$  is hydrogen atom, carboxyl group, a  $-\text{COOR}^5$  group wherein  $R^5$  is an alkyl group having at least 20 to 30 carbon atoms, or a  $-\text{CONR}^5\text{R}^6$  group wherein  $R^5$  is as defined above and  $R^6$  is hydrogen atom, an alkyl group or an aryl group;  $R^4$  is a  $-\text{COOR}^5$  group wherein  $R^5$  is as defined above, or a  $-\text{CONR}^5\text{R}^6$  group wherein  $R^5$  and  $R^6$  are as defined above, a salt-forming group-containing monomer, and a monomer copolymerizable with the monomer represented by the Formula (I) and the salt-forming group-containing monomer.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Original) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein the alkyl group in the side chain of the water-insoluble polymer is linear.

6. (Original) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein the water-based ink further comprises 5 to 35% by weight of a permeability controlling solvent.

7. (previously presented) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein said alkyl group is of 20 to 26 carbon atoms.

8. (previously presented) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein said alkyl group is of 22 to 26 carbon atoms.

9. (previously presented) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein said polymer contains a salt-forming group or a salt-forming group containing monomer which is neutralized.

10. (previously presented) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein said water-insoluble polymer has a solubility in water at 25° of at most 15 % by weight.

11. (previously presented) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein said water-insoluble polymer has a solubility in water at 25° of at most 10 % by weight.

12. (previously presented) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein said water-insoluble polymer has a solubility in water at 25° of at most 5 % by weight.

13. (previously presented) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein said water-insoluble polymer has a solubility in water at 25° of at most 1 % by weight.

14. (previously presented) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein said water-insoluble polymer comprises 2 to 20 parts by weight of a salt-forming group-containing monomer.

15. (previously presented) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein said water-insoluble polymer comprises 5 to 15 parts by weight of a salt-forming group-containing monomer.

16. (previously presented) The water-based ink according to claim 6, wherein said permeability controlling solvent is at least one selected from the group consisting of isopropanol, 2-pyrrolidinone, diethylene glycol monobutyl ether, triethylene glycol monobutyl ether and a mixture thereof.

17. (previously presented) The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein said water-based ink further comprises 10 to 30 wt. % of a permeability controlling solvent.